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28 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Briefing for Planning and Programming Officers by Sherman Kent

At 1400 hours on the 28th of December a meeting was convened in the for Planning and Programming Officers. Mr. Sherman Kent, retiring ONE, was the guest speaker. Mr. Kent's presentation rambled through many subjects, none of which had a real direct bearing on planning and programming. It was, however, an extremely interesting and informative presentation by a man of unparalleled knowledge and experience in the intelligence community.

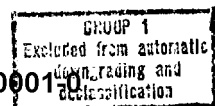
2. Highlights of Mr. Kent's presentation are as follows:

- a. There is nothing on the horizon at present to indicate that there will be any impressive improvement in strategic intelligence for the foreseeable future. The main reason for this is that there is insufficient incentive to military intelligence collectors. They cannot attain a grade above Colonel in almost any instance. Consequently, they leave the military and go either to a civilian industry or a civilian intelligence organization, e.g. CIA.
- b. The Agency should be able to retain its major tasks of collection, processing, and production of intelligence for the foreseeable future. There is nothing to indicate that there will be any drastic reduction in the Agency's responsibilities or functions. Further, the Agency is highly regarded by many influential people in Congress who will protect it from any drastic change.
- c. Mr. Kent stated that in his opinion military long-range planning is sheer madness. To plan fifteen years ahead is affluent and worthless. By the time the planned system is in effect it is obsolete and a waste of manpower and funds have resulted. The lead time for new weapons is far too long and must be reduced before added effectiveness to the planning system is evolved.
- d. Many of the requirements levied on the intelligence community are in Mr. Kent's opinion "unnecessary hogwash." The Agency should be able to concentrate on the intelligence items that are really needed for government policy and decisions. Mr. Kent does not feel that Mr. McNamara's departure will be the answer to this problem.
- e. The most crying need in the intelligence community today is for more of the right kind of people. Recruitment is a very great problem and hiring more people of lesser qualification is in no way, shape, or form the answer to this dilemma. The Vietnamese war with the campus demonstrations and apathy that have accompanied it has done the intelligence community a great injustice.

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3. Mr. Kent stated that the Agency and more specifically the ONE had made four basic blunders in recent years:

1. We were slow in identifying the Sino-Soviet split.
2. The Tallinn ABM system was not recognized for its true identity as soon as it should have been.
3. We were slow in recognizing the willingness of the Soviet Union to deal with capitalist and "bourgeois" nations. An example of this is seen in their dealings with the Arab nations in the Middle East.
4. We did not identify the movement of the Soviet-bloc nations away from control by the Soviet Union as rapidly as we should have.

4. In his closing remarks, Mr. Kent stated that the PNIOs are all but worthless. They lean strongly toward reflecting favorite projects of the vested few but they do not serve the government of the nation as planning requirements.

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